

May 18, 2006



**TRANSCRIPT  
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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**PRESENT**

George Leventhal, President	Marilyn J. Praisner, Vice President
Phil Andrews	Howard Denis
Nancy Floreen	Michael Knapp
Thomas Perez	Steven A. Silverman
	Michael Subin



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Council President Leventhal,

Ladies and gentlemen, we are in session. If conversations need to occur they can be taken out in the hallway, please. I want to welcome everyone. We're gathered here to announce the details of our operating budget for the new fiscal year that begins July 1 and for our six-year Capital Improvements Program. As I think about this budget season I'm struck by two things. First of all, what a fortunate county we are. Our economy is strong and that meant more resources to work with. We were able to fund our critical priorities: Education, Public Safety, Health and Human Services, Park and Planning, Environmental Protection, Recreation, Libraries, and many more, and provide \$127 million property tax reduction. And second, I'm struck by the remarkable good will and collegiality that has characterized our work on the budget this year. We all pulled together to do the job we were elected to do, all nine of us and the County Executive. I've enjoyed working with all my colleagues and value very much the passion that each bring to making this good county even better. Thank you, Nancy Floreen and Steve Silverman, for thinking creatively to find more resources to battle traffic congestion. We are approving today \$160 million in forward funding that will improve mobility on state roads and expand our transit facilities. Thank you, Marilyn Praisner, for pushing to extend afterschool programs from the present 10 to all 38 middle schools in Montgomery County. We know that afterschool programs are the key to attacking so many social problems, including gangs, teen pregnancy, drug abuse, and childhood obesity. Thank you, Tom Perez and Mike Subin, for setting in motion an effort to open up English language classes to all who want to learn. We are a stronger and a better community because people bring their talents and abilities here from other parts of the world. And we will continue to get stronger and better as our newest residents improve their ability to participate fully in our social and economic life. Thank you, Mike Knapp, for advocating for the new Sharp Street Suspension Program that's going to benefit Watkins Mill High School kids and parents, and for the other items in this budget of special interest to Gaithersburg, Germantown, Olney, and the Agricultural Reserve. The people of the Upcounty are so lucky to have you working on their behalf. Thank you, Phil Andrews, for your initiative to make sure seniors ride free on RideOn buses all day and your leadership on behalf of our police, our victims of crime, and our court and corrections facilities. And thank you, Howie Denis, for standing with the community to make sure we had a plan to alleviate overcrowding in the Churchill Cluster that made sense to us and to the parents and kids involved. And finally, thank you, Doug Duncan, you gave us an excellent recommended budget to work with. We are a remarkably progressive and well managed county, and that didn't happen by accident. It happened because we have astute voters and dedicated public officials and the most successful County Executive in our county's history. For myself I'm so pleased that we doubled our commitment to Montgomery Cares which will provide health care to those tens of thousands of county residents without health insurance. We are idealistic and caring enough in this county to believe that no adult and no child should go without health care because they lack insurance. But we aren't just passing resolutions or wringing our hands about the problem. We are making sure that everyone who is poor and sick in this county can see a doctor. We are working with our nonprofit partners and the religious community. We are providing culturally competent care in multiple languages.



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1 We are a model for the nation. Imagine if we saw a little of that same idealism, that "Can  
2 do" attitude in state government... and especially in the federal government. I'm also  
3 gratified that we've increased significantly our programs to combat homelessness in this  
4 county. An affluent county must do what it can to ameliorate the conditions of those  
5 residents who are the most desperate and the most needy. We have forged a real and  
6 lasting partnership with nonprofit service providers. This budget reflects our continuing  
7 efforts to build capacity with those organizations that are best equipped to deliver help  
8 to people in need. And I want to thank again our citizen volunteers who served on our  
9 Grants Review panel and provided informed recommendations on how best to support  
10 the nonprofit sector. One place where we did have real friction was on the question of  
11 the Seven Locks Elementary School replacement. That conflict was healthy. We came  
12 out of that disagreement in a very good place. And I'm glad we are moving to exercise  
13 more oversight over the nearly half the budget that goes to the Montgomery County  
14 Public Schools. The tenacious Seven Locks Elementary community helped us get  
15 there...and our independent Inspector General helped us, and the tireless labors of  
16 Howie Denis and his staff. In this budget we're approving two new Council staff  
17 positions that will be devoted to the Montgomery County Public Schools. Oversight  
18 requires information and analysis. Why is this important? Because we are the peoples'  
19 representatives and we are responsible for how the people's dollars are spent. It's as  
20 simple as that. It's not Doug Duncan's budget. It's not the County Council's budget. It's  
21 not Jerry Weast's budget. It's the people's budget. We're here to serve the people of  
22 Montgomery County. They are entitled to know how their money is being spent. They  
23 need to know if our educational goals, and all of our goals, are being achieved.  
24 Communities deserve to be listened to, really listened to before a decision is made, not  
25 after the train has already left the station. Openness, accountability, sunshine, that's  
26 what we need more of. We cannot run a \$2 billion public institution as if it were a  
27 privately-held corporation. I want to thank so much our outstanding County Council  
28 staff, led by Steve Farber and including all -- too many to name -- of the extraordinary  
29 analysts and support people who serve us on the fifth and sixth floors. And I'm so  
30 grateful for my personal staff, Valerie Ervin, Patty Vitale, and Walt Harris. I couldn't do  
31 any of what I've done, and we couldn't achieve what we've achieved without them. And  
32 mostly, again, I want to thank my colleagues. It's a privilege to serve on this body with  
33 you. At this point I'm going to ask the staff to distribute... The CIP reconciliation will go  
34 first. Dr. Orlin.

35  
36 Glenn Orlin,

37 I'll try to keep this to about 10 minutes. If there's any questions please ask at the end,  
38 save some time. Going into reconciliation the idea is to try to get all of the spending in  
39 the Capital Program reconciled with forecasts and with Spending Affordability  
40 Guidelines. Going into it we're about \$75 million oversubscribed during the six-year  
41 period and about \$100 million over in the early years of the CIP.. If you approve  
42 everything in this package it will be fully reconciled for both Park and Planning Bonds,  
43 General Obligation Bonds, both sorts of impact taxes, recordation tax, as well as current  
44 revenue. I want to take just a moment to thank a few individuals. A lot of the people  
45 work on the CIP, but five stood out in the last few weeks in helping me develop this:

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1 Martha Lamborn and Jacqueline Carter from OMB, Dick Hawes from the School  
2 System, Ober Serano from DPWT, Donna Pena from Montgomery College, and, of  
3 course, Mary Jane Berry from our staff. Let me touch on the high points -- more critical  
4 points in the packet and open for questions. For Park and Planning Bonds you're  
5 reconciled with adding some current revenue in Fiscal Year '10 to cover one project  
6 which is short of funds. In terms of current revenue the major change here is that three  
7 projects that are in the School System's CIP that were recommended for the first time,  
8 that were funded for information technology, the full FY '07 funding would be provided  
9 but the funding in FY '08, '09 and '10 would be reduced by half. In School Impact Taxes  
10 and Recordation Tax, the School Impact Tax is a concern. The revenue assumptions  
11 that you approved in February are what we used to reconcile the CIP. You are fully  
12 reconciled, but know that the revenues for the School Impact Tax are only about half of  
13 what a you projected. So this really ought to be revisited sometime in the summer and  
14 fall and may need to have revision for the next -- even update of the CIP for next year.  
15 Transportation Impact Tax, more or less the same story. The Impact Tax Revenue there  
16 is coming in somewhat slower than what it was projected. And since the forecast is  
17 showing for much more I think it's worth looking into again, before we go any further in  
18 the CIP than beyond FY '07. What we've done here is to program the remainder of the  
19 Impact Tax Funds. The Executive did not recommend -- or did not have in his  
20 recommendations Programming Transportation Impact Tax Funds out after the first  
21 couple of years. This would fund all of the revenue in the forecast, including about \$50  
22 million of Impact Taxes in the out years to replace General Obligation Bonds on the  
23 State Transportation Participation Project. General Obligation Bonds: here there are  
24 several changes. First of all, the Bond Target, this is not the guideline, but the Bond  
25 Target for fiscal year 2009, the recommendation is to increase that to \$264 million. The  
26 current Bond Guidelines are \$264 million in '07 and '08, then \$235 and \$235 in '09 and  
27 '10, \$230 and \$230 in '11 and '12. This would change that string to 264, 264, those  
28 would remain the same in the first two years. \$264 in the third year, \$226 in the fourth  
29 year, and \$220 in the fifth and sixth years. I asked OMB to run Debt Capacity analyses  
30 for both the Executive's recommended CIP, which had the original string of numbers,  
31 this particular string of numbers. and what I'm sure the next question of our out of your  
32 mouth is "What would happen if we assume \$264 million every year since if you have  
33 \$264 million in the first three years, I think it's pretty reasonable to think that that's  
34 probably, at least what we'd have in the last three years once we get there." If you do  
35 that you find that all of the scenarios meet all of the guidelines, all the debt indicators in  
36 every year across the board, with the exception of one indicator which fails in every  
37 scenario and every year. Secondly, increase PayGo by \$15 million more than what the  
38 Executive recommended in FY '08 and FY '09, and \$4 million more in FY'10 and  
39 actually reduce it in '11 and '12. What this means is there'd be \$15 million less revenue  
40 available for the Operating Budget in Fiscal Year '08 and in '09 than what you otherwise  
41 would have, all else being equal. One thing that this does do, both the changes in the  
42 bond targets and the guidelines and the PayGo changes still maintains the new policy  
43 adopted by the Council and the Executive to maintain to at least a 10% amount of  
44 PayGo compared to the bond levels. So, in other words, for example, in '07, \$264  
45 million worth of bonds, \$26.4 million in PayGo. Every year the PayGo is at least 10% of



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1 the bond levels. There are a few changes to projects that have been reported by  
2 agencies. So these aren't delays that we're foisting on the world, it's happened or is  
3 happening. The Detention Center Reuse, Nebel Street Extended, and Redland Road  
4 projects are being delayed for production reasons for up to a year each. And at  
5 Montgomery College the Commons renovation and Rockville physical plant projects,  
6 which were scheduled for design in FY '07, the state funding was not approved for them  
7 in '07. And so those projects, of course, are being delayed one year, to '08. Then there  
8 are certain projects we actually are, in this reconciliation package, cutting or deferring.  
9 Judicial Center Annex: the Executive had not recommended any funds programmed for  
10 construction. It's a project that will cost somewhere between \$120 to \$170 million. The  
11 Council, up to this point, had set aside a placeholder of \$42.8 million as a start towards  
12 that \$120 to \$170. This would reduce that placeholder to \$30 million, but, again, it's \$30  
13 million more than the Executive had in his recommendation. It would also stretch the  
14 placeholder out to Fiscal Year '11. The Olney Library renovation and addition: the  
15 Executive had recommended delaying it by two years, this would delay it by one year.  
16 It's completion would be in Fiscal Year 2010. Resurfacing primary arterial streets: this is  
17 the resurfacing program for major roads that are county roads. The Council tentatively  
18 approved a major increase in this project this year, raising to the point of, on an  
19 average, \$7.5 million a year, which is what the Infrastructure Maintenance Task Force  
20 says you need to do on an annual basis to keep up. What this does is it honors that  
21 amount in Fiscal Year '07. It reduces the increase by \$1.5 million in '08 and '09 and  
22 adds it back in the last three years. So over the six-year period it's the same amount of  
23 money, but it's less money in '08 and '09. The Silver Spring Green Trail: the Executive  
24 recommended a three-year delay, this would be a two-year delay in this reconciliation.  
25 U.S. 29 sidewalks on the west side: this was a two-year delay recommended by the  
26 Executive. This reconciliation packet assumes a one-year delay. The Bioscience Center  
27 for the college at Germantown was recommended to be accelerated by one year, this  
28 would keep it on its current schedule, which was also what was recommended by the  
29 Executive, and the project will be finished in 2011. Finally, there's a whole series what  
30 we call technical adjustments, you'll see them on the spreadsheets on Circles 16  
31 through 17. What these are are large shifts of money -- actually it's relatively small shifts  
32 of money in a lot of the projects from year to the next, or the next to the year after. They  
33 do not affect the schedule for these projects. I want to make sure everyone understands  
34 that. It just strictly means that the project managers from the agencies are saying that  
35 money can be spent later in the project schedule but it does not change the schedule.  
36 And the example I gave is Redland Road on Circle 46, where a shift of \$2.5 million is  
37 being made from '09 to '11. The school will still open in August, 2010. Finally, on page 7  
38 you see the resulting Capital Reserve for G.O. Bonds, in '07 you'd be starting off with a  
39 reserve of about \$9.2 million, which is a bit better than what the Executive had, it's still  
40 not very much though. The six-year total is virtually identical to what the Executive had.  
41 And that, in summary, is the Reconciliation Packet. I would say that as a result of this no  
42 projects in the School System and no project in the Parks Department will be delayed  
43 as a result of this. There are a few projects in the college which will be delayed or  
44 deferred and a few in the county government. And this also assumes, again, a larger  
45 increase in PayGo and an earlier amount of debt. Thank you.



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Council President Leventhal,  
Ms. Praisner.

Councilmember Praisner,

I want to thank Mr. Orlin. This was much more than the simple task of reviewing the Capital Budget and reconciling numbers, that happens every year. There was significant work that needed to be done to reconcile the budget. The one issue that I think gives Mr. Orlin as much angst as it gives me is increasing the assumptions for debt capacity in out years. I want to make a couple of points, because -- and they will relate but I'll expand them even further when we get to the Operating Budget. I had the fortune or misfortune of being elected to the County Council in 1990, joining my good friend, Mike Subin, who was here already. Those of us who were part of that first period in the early 90's went through some very painful times for all of us, including having us put on negative watch by the bond rating agencies. And working very hard to try to get out of that watch. Since then we've expanded a number of capacities for ourself, introducing Recordation Tax and Impact Taxes, which provide additional capacity for capital projects. But, in any case, when you use anything other than a ready, steady stream of revenue that you can project over time, like the less than equitable or fair Property Tax, you are dealing with very volatile revenue. And I think Mr. Orlin's comments or concerns about the housing market and construction and housing starts and activity and nonresidential construction should give us some concern about the realistic -- the reasonableness and "realisticness" -- if that's a word -- and even if it isn't, I'm going to use it -- of the estimates that we project. And when you project over 6 years -- yes, there's only once that the county reduced its Capital Budget after having made some assumptions for a 6-year period. But we did it, and we had to do it based on the economy and the revenue at that point. So, when people look at a 6-year CIP and they look at revenue assumptions that continue to be the most optimistic I think we need to have some concern. So we will continue in the MFP Committee, Management and Fiscal Policy Committee, to look at the fiscal policy pieces of this. And continue to look through the economic indicators and review with Mr. Firestine and with his great, terrific staff, who help us with monitoring and tracking activity, whether those revenues will continue -- or revenue assumptions will continue to be as rosy as they appear right now. Just one other comment about the Capital Budget. It's also, as Mr. Orlin indicated, we look at the means by which we test whether it's a reasonable budget, by evaluating it against five or so indicators. The one we have paid the most attention to is the 10% of the Operating Budget. If you continue to grow an Operating Budget at double digit increases, then obviously you can meet your 10%. But is that really realistic and is it sustainable? And is that component the one that we should only look at and are there other components and other issues that we should be looking at? And in the next few months and year ahead I will, in the Management and Fiscal Policy Committee, be scheduling meetings with Mr. Firestine and Finance and OMB for us to continue to look at and refine that amount. Because if you're doing one-time-only funds, then I'm not sure you should measure them over a longer period. And I'm not sure that every source of revenue that we use for expenditures should be incorporated -- or all of the ones that



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1 we do now should be incorporated into our estimate of that 10%. We're also doing some  
2 debt through Revenue Bonds. We've done that before and that's not unusual. But it is a  
3 higher interest rate that we pay when we pay Revenue Bonds. So that means there's  
4 more of a drain on the Operating Budget for the interest paid on those. Yes, it's liquor  
5 money. And I'm sure this community will do our part to make sure that the Liquor  
6 Revenue continues to come in. But there are some improvements that need to be done  
7 in the Department of Liquor Control, thanks to our employees who have even more  
8 ideas of how to be more efficient and effective. And I would suspect through the Gain  
9 Sharing program we hope to start then we will see even more coming out of the  
10 employees who I believe and trust know best how to do their jobs more efficiently and  
11 effectively if just given the tools. So, that may require more of an expenditure in support,  
12 and less of the dollars. But we still keep drinking, so I guess it will be okay. My point  
13 being that that's money that would have been used in the Operating Budget for general  
14 requirements. So now it's going to be used for Debt Service. The budget is a good one.  
15 It includes a lot of good things. But we need to look beyond the today of -- the vote of  
16 today and look at sustainability in the years to come.

17  
18 Council President Leventhal,

19 Thank you, Ms. Praisner. We will cast our final votes next week. But for the time being  
20 let us have a show of hands on the Capital Budget CIP as a straw vote, to indicate that  
21 the Council approves the Capital Budget CIP. Those in favor will signify by raising their  
22 hands on the CIP. It is unanimous Okay, we are now prepared to discuss reconciliation  
23 items on the budget. And, Mr. Farber, is this the point at which the audience can...

24  
25 Unidentified Speaker,  
26 Start drinking.

27  
28 Councilmember Praisner,  
29 Start drinking.

30  
31 [LAUGHTER]

32  
33 Council President Leventhal,  
34 That comes later! That comes later.

35  
36 Councilmember Silverman,  
37 We need more roads and transit.

38  
39 Council President Leventhal,  
40 That's on the Agenda for later. Stay with me about another hour.

41  
42 Councilmember Praisner,  
43 Do your part. Bring our budget in.

44  
45 Council President Leventhal,



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1 Mr. Farber, did you have some remarks regarding the Reconciliation List?

2  
3 Steve Farber,

4 No, I think, Mr. President, it speaks for itself. This is the final piece of the puzzle and  
5 perhaps we can let people have a chance to take a look at it and go to comments from  
6 Councilmembers.

7  
8 Council President Leventhal,

9 Okay, well, we can wrap this up quickly. There are no lights on so nobody has anything  
10 to say and we're in good shape. Mr. Andrews?

11  
12 Councilmember Andrews,

13 Thank you. Mr. President. First I do want to commend you for your effective leadership  
14 during this budget season, in bringing us together on this. There are many good aspects  
15 to this budget. I'll just list a few of them, and I know other colleagues will talk about  
16 others. I think it is notable that the for the third year in a row the Council is providing  
17 property tax relief to our residents. This will be the third year in a row that the Council  
18 has reduced the property tax rate. And with this five cent reduction this year that is a ten  
19 cent reduction over the three years which is about a 10% reduction in the property tax  
20 rate. It's important because homeowners in the county have been hit with staggering  
21 increases in assessments that average 69% in the last cycle for the previous three  
22 years, and we're not far below that in the two previous cycles. So what that means is  
23 that for the average homeowner their bill would double in seven years if the Council  
24 didn't take action to reduce the property tax rate or provide other property tax relief. And  
25 the Council is doing a combination of initiatives here. In contrast to the Council's ten  
26 cent reduction in the past three years, which is a 10% reduction, the state raised the  
27 state property tax rate in 2003 by 60%. Raising it five cents that year. They reduced it  
28 by a penny this year, but that still meant an overall increase of 50% in the state property  
29 tax rate. So I think you can see a dramatic difference there. At the same time that the  
30 Council has provided tax relief and met the Charter limit the last two years, including  
31 this year, the Council is providing ample funding for essential services, and that is  
32 crucial as well, because we need to make sure we have excellent schools and excellent  
33 public safety services and is key health and human services for your residents and  
34 adequate infrastructure maintenance, which we still need to struggle with. We're still not  
35 where we need to be in terms of keeping up with our infrastructure. But we have made  
36 some improvements there. And Councilmember Perez and Councilmember Praisner  
37 headed up those efforts in the past two years to highlight the need for more investment  
38 in maintaining our roads and our facilities so that we don't see a general decline in those  
39 areas. I want to finalize this really by -- I have one more comment -- and that is an  
40 initiative that I proposed in this budget which I'm very pleased the Council has  
41 supported is a very targeted initiative to respond to what I heard from the Commission  
42 On Aging, and also I had -- have had discussions with members of the Commission On  
43 People With Disabilities. All the studies that I've seen from those organizations, and  
44 others, talk about the importance of social interaction for seniors and for people with  
45 disabilities. And what I proposed was that we provide free RideOn service and free





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1 Metro bus service, since many of our routes are only served by Metro bus, during the  
2 middle of the day on weekdays for seniors and people with disabilities to improve the  
3 ability of those folks to access social services when those social services are almost  
4 always open; whether they're doctor's offices or senior centers or libraries, you name it.  
5 So what this proposal will do at modest cost for an estimated cost of a total of \$250,000  
6 a year -- \$125 for the RideOn proposal, and another \$125,000 for the Metro bus  
7 ridership -- is to provide free services during the two rush hour periods during  
8 weekdays, Monday through Friday. This will begin in July and it will be a way to  
9 increase access by many people in our community who really do need increased  
10 access to social services. And I hope this will provide an additional incentive to enhance  
11 that. But again, I think at modest cost. So my goal was to achieve hopefully a  
12 substantial improvement at modest cost. And I'm very pleased that this has been  
13 supported by the County Council And I hope that the folks that are working in our senior  
14 centers and other facilities will help get the word out to their constituents so that they  
15 can use this and will know about it, because it doesn't do a lot of good if we pass  
16 something and no one knows about it. Finally, I do want to say that I agree with Ms.  
17 Praisner that we need to pay a lot of attention to the sustainability of our budgets. We're  
18 going to have increased pressures in future budgets, such as the requirement to start  
19 funding under the new GASB requirements that has been talked about a little bit. That's  
20 a very significant amount of money. It's estimated that that will eventually be in the  
21 range of -- if I'm wrong, Mr. Farber, correct me -- but \$160 million annually.

22  
23 Steve Farber,  
24 Per year.

25  
26 Councilmember Andrews,  
27 Per year. And that is by any measure a lot of money in order to comply with that. And  
28 we will have to put a substantial amount of money into that because the bond rating  
29 agencies will expect us to if we want to maintain our AAA rating. And that is right around  
30 the corner. So that has to be factored into the claims on future budgets. I again want to  
31 thank Mr. President for your very accomplished leadership in -- throughout this budget  
32 process. I think this is a budget that meets many good goals. But I do think that we have  
33 to pay very special attention in the next couple of years to addressing the additional  
34 claims that will be required of us that are not required this year.

35  
36 Council President Leventhal,  
37 Mr. Perez.

38  
39 Councilmember Perez,  
40 Thank you, Mr. President. I want to join Councilmember Andrews in thanking you for  
41 your leadership throughout the budget process. I've enjoyed and our interactions and  
42 our friendships and I want to personally thank you. This is that time of the year, having  
43 been here -- time flies what you're having fun -- I remember year one like it was  
44 yesterday and suddenly it's year four. You reach a point where you almost know  
45 everybody's speech. So I was going to suggest that we put everybody's speech in the



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1 hopper and we draw straws and I'll deliver Mr. Andrews' speech and we can talk about  
2 the Great Gatsby. And the he can draw mine and talk about budgets are moral  
3 documents and we can mix and match. But everybody has good points to make and I  
4 never tire of them. It has been a improving economic cycle and that has been a good  
5 thing. And I do believe that this is a document that is indeed morally and fiscally  
6 responsible. Councilmember Andrews outlined the tax relief and again highlighted that  
7 not only does everybody get relief but those who need it most will get the most. And that  
8 is a good, progressive way to carry out a budget document. It also reflects our clear  
9 priority that educating our kids is the most important function of county government and  
10 that's reflected in our budget. It continues to be regrettable that at a federal level we  
11 have such an abdication of responsibility. You look at the Special Ed context where, in  
12 the best of times, the feds are about \$100 million or so short of their commitment under  
13 the Individuals With Disabilities and Education Act, and they are getting worse, not  
14 better. And so we're going to have to come back to that issue, I suspect, in the fall. And  
15 not because of anything other than the utter abdication of moral and fiscal responsibility  
16 at a federal level. That abdication puts a real strain on county resources. And every year  
17 I keep a tally of things that are in the budget that are a direct result of a judgment we  
18 make to effectively backfill and make up for failures at a federal and state level. And that  
19 number is somewhere in the \$150 million range. And that's a conservative estimate  
20 when you add up health care, when you add up education, when you add up housing,  
21 when you add up all these safety net services. Local government was not supposed to  
22 be the first and only line of defense for vulnerable people, but it is, and continues to be.  
23 And we will continue to be in Montgomery County an incubator of innovation. The  
24 Montgomery Cares program is a remarkable program and I want to applaud the County  
25 Executive for his continuing investment in it. It will allow us to really become a national  
26 model. I actually think health care reform isn't going to occur at a national level. It's  
27 going to occur in the laboratories of democracy's states and local governments across  
28 the country who are going to be able to solve this problem. You've seen it in  
29 Massachusetts recently with an innovative proposal. We'll see whether it works, but I  
30 give them an "A" for creativity, and that's what we're doing here. And we have made  
31 real progress in addressing the needs of our most vulnerable residents. And this budget  
32 bears out our fact and our commitment to serving everybody. To making sure that we  
33 are, indeed, an opportunity community where everybody has an opportunity to realize  
34 the American dream. I want to -- I would be remiss if I didn't thank my friends and  
35 colleagues, Mike Subin and Marilyn Praisner, for their leadership in the area of adult  
36 education. We recognize that adult education is good for the business community  
37 because it satisfies critical workforce development needs. It's great for Jerry Weast, and  
38 it's great for every school teacher in Montgomery County because if your parents can't  
39 help you with your homework you can't close the gap. It's that simple. It's our teachers  
40 and our parents that are the two keys to our children's development. And the  
41 investments in this budget are going to enable us to make a real dent in the waiting list.  
42 Nobody in this county or in this state or in this country who wants to learn English  
43 should have to wait two and three years. You can't have it both ways. If you are one of  
44 these radical conservatives who wants to throw everyone out, but then -- and also says  
45 that people have to learn English, but then doesn't want to fund it. You can't have it both



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ways. Fortunately, we are a progressive community. We have Republicans in the tradition of Abe Lincoln, like Howard Denis, who like Jean Cryor, who have worked with us working together to make sure we build an opportunity community. And I think that money, \$575,000, I believe it is, is going to enable us to make a real dent in the waiting list of people seeking to learn English. I'm ecstatic that we were able to provide money to address the pension issues. And one of the main reasons I'm ecstatic is because the universe of people that stands to gain from this investment are the universe of people who are at the lowest end of the wage scale in the Montgomery County Public Schools, our bus drivers, our support personnel. They are the cohort of people who disproportionately benefit from this investment that we're making. These are people who often work on a 10-month contract and they're not working full-time during that 10-month period. So you're making an annual salary sometimes in the range of \$25,000, \$28,000. That's not enough to make ends meet in Montgomery County, and we need to value their service. One of my favorite parts of the day is the morning when I drop the kids at the bus and [Ms. Vee] always has a smile on her face. and sometimes when I'm speeding...

[LAUGHTER]

Councilmember Perez,

...well, when I'm heading down the street to make the bus... I withdraw that comment! When I am ambling down the street to make the bus, she knows my car and she always is there and she always has a smile on her face. She doesn't simply transport our kids to school, she starts our kids' day on a safe and optimistic and comforting note. And that's why we have to make sure we take care of people like that and employees like that who add so much to our county. So this is a budget that I'm very proud of. I'm proud of the work we're doing in the Arts, a number of very worthy Arts organizations who are going to be able to do very important projects that will help build the community. And that is critically important. I know that there are some who we weren't able to fund and that's the case every year, that's the hardest part of this job. You always have to say no to people who you know are doing great things. And that will be the case this year, it was the case last year, and it will be the case next year. I don't believe I'll be here next year, but I know that this Council will continue its tradition of service and commitment to underserved communities and to making sure we have a true opportunity community. So, this is a great body, this is a great budget, and there are great people around here making sure that we are indeed a county that our communities in compassionate, innovative, and effective ways. So, thank you, again, Mr. President, for your leadership, your friendship, and for helping us get to a budget that I believe really is -- meets and passes with flying colors my test of fiscal and moral responsibility. And thank you for the privilege, District Five, of serving.

Council President Leventhal,  
Mr. Silverman.

Councilmember Silverman,



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1 Thank you, Mr. President. A few brief comments. I appreciate everybody's hard work. I  
2 think a couple of things are very important in terms of major steps forward. The first is a  
3 significant commitment to transportation funding, both in terms of roads and transit. We  
4 are taking the unprecedented step of putting \$160 million of county money on the table,  
5 which can leverage, probably about a half a billion dollars in state money to get  
6 Montgomery county moving again. We need both roads and transit and this is a major  
7 statement and a major step forward for this Council and this county. We are -- by our  
8 final vote next week, we will be increasing our commitment to traffic congestion relief by  
9 75% over the previous Council. The second point is that we're taking a step forward in  
10 terms of the environment. The initiative for focusing on addressing the challenges of  
11 existing communities in terms of stormwater management and in terms of stream  
12 restoration is a path that we need to move aggressively down. And I'm pleased that  
13 we've been able to take that step forward. Just a couple of other quick comments. I  
14 want to applaud and thank the Council President, Mr. Leventhal, for his leadership in  
15 pulling the budget together and, more importantly, his focus on access to health care for  
16 the uninsured. And a continuing commitment to the homeless community, the least  
17 fortunate in our county. When we look back, after we all leave this body, we can take a  
18 look at some of the great innovations that we have been able to accomplish here, and  
19 Montgomery Cares is certainly at the top of the list. And I commend Mr. Leventhal for  
20 that. Finally, a couple comments about education. I won't repeat what I said about Mr.  
21 Denis yesterday, but I know he would like that. But I will, once again...

22  
23 [LAUGHTER]

24  
25 Councilmember Silverman,  
26 I know. I'll once again thank him for his leadership in pulling us back from the brink and  
27 resolving a challenge for the Churchill community that extends to other communities as  
28 well. And, finally, I want to thank my good friend and seatmate, Mike Subin, for his  
29 continuing unflagging leadership in connection with education. This is an extraordinary -  
30 - as he would say -- an extraordinary education budget on three levels: Number 1,  
31 significant investment in our operating budget for personnel, but focused on what we  
32 need to be doing for the kids. Secondly, and extraordinary investment in building and  
33 modernizing schools to make sure that our employees have a safe place to work and  
34 our kids have a wonderful place to learn. And, finally, for his leadership -- and I was  
35 pleased to join him in this effort -- in supporting our efforts to make sure that our public  
36 school employees get a fair shake when it comes to retirement. I think that will go a long  
37 way to helping to continue to recruit and retain our public employees, who do such an  
38 incredible job in helping our children each and every day. So, as Mr. Perez had  
39 commented, I will not be here for the next round of budgeting, at least on this side of the  
40 table, and I appreciate the work of our -- all of my colleagues, but in particular the  
41 incredible job of our staff in being able to pull together budgets year after year, after  
42 year by working together. And I do want to finally mention my good friend and  
43 colleague, Mike Knapp. I try -- I listen very carefully when he says -- when he reminds  
44 me that I represent the Upcounty as well. And I appreciate his leadership on issues,  
45 particularly in terms of economic development in the Germantown community, which I



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1 know will go a long way to helping to address some of our traffic congestion challenges,  
2 as well. Thank you very much.

3  
4 Council President Leventhal,  
5 Ms. Floreen.

6  
7 Councilmember Floreen,

8 Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you, Mr. President, for your extraordinary  
9 leadership in getting us through this budget. It was easier than previous years but,  
10 remarkably, with the revenue as good as it was we still had some challenges, and we  
11 worked it through very effectively. And I say thank you for that. Just wanted to make a  
12 few comments. Karl Moritz, I see you, you're in the audience. You made out like a  
13 bandit. I'd say that this is a no excuses Park and Planning budget. So we will expect  
14 great things from you in terms of the technology improvements that we're funding. So  
15 congratulations and we expect to see great things in the coming year. I wanted to say  
16 thank you to the nonprofit community. Not everyone received everything that they asked  
17 us for, but the nonprofit community I think did extraordinarily well this year, which means  
18 that our residents are going to do extraordinarily well. You, as a community, provide to  
19 our residents services and opportunities that government cannot, which is why we like  
20 to help you out. You use public funds to leverage private investment and volunteer  
21 work. That is a remarkable gift of energy and enthusiasm and support to our county  
22 residents. And I thank you very much for what you do and I wish you well in using these  
23 funds. I wanted to thank my colleagues for supporting the addition of nearly \$1 million to  
24 the Library budget. This is not a group that is out there banging on the door. It is not  
25 sending us hundreds of e-mails, it is -- they're busy reading, they're busy learning  
26 English, they're busy trying to check things out, they're busy putting things on hold and  
27 the increases in this budget will add tremendous resources to materials, maintenance,  
28 and community support. So I thank everybody for that. I think this is a budget, while  
29 we've been able to do some extras, we've also been able to focus on basics. And I think  
30 that is a fabulous thing. I wanted to commend my colleague, Steve Silverman, for  
31 pushing and pushing the Finance Department to assist us in coming up with a funding  
32 plan to add \$80 million additional to the budget for transportation improvements. What  
33 I've learned here in the past four years is that if you keep asking hard questions and  
34 stick to it, sometimes you can get some excellent solutions. So, I commend you, Mr.  
35 Silverman, and I am very pleased that this is...

36  
37 Councilmember Silverman,  
38 Don't forget to thank Tim.

39  
40 Councilmember Floreen,

41 Oh, well, I especially thank Tim! But you gotta stay on it... He's hiding. There he is. You  
42 have to keep asking the questions and pushing people and being on their backs to get  
43 solutions. And so I thank you both for that effort. I think it is a remarkable budget that  
44 funds both the planning for the southern entrance of the Bethesda Metro station and  
45 money for resurfacing of the Georgetown Branch, in parts. That shows tremendous





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1 community cooperation. It understands that there's going to be a light rail line. It  
2 understands, also, that it's going to have to respect community concerns. So I commend  
3 my colleagues, and especially Glenn Orlin for putting the opposing sides together at the  
4 table to work out a plan. Obviously this is not a permanent effort, but it's going to  
5 address some short-term needs that are really going to make that trail accessible,  
6 particularly in the Silver Spring area while the details of the light rail effort are worked  
7 through. I wanted to thank Mr. Denis. The Seven Locks solution was a tremendous  
8 challenge to work out, but you did it. And in doing so, you did it in a way that is fiscally  
9 responsible, allows the other schools in the region, and really throughout the whole  
10 system, to proceed -- to offer the right necessary needs for the right design and the right  
11 future throughout the county. That was not an easy effort, we had a lot of community  
12 concerns that were listened to very thoughtfully. It took a long time but with your effort,  
13 Mr. Denis, we achieved a very good thing. So I wanted to thank you very much. Thank  
14 you very much. And, finally, the issue of the environment, I think, is one that we're going  
15 to be looking at over the future. And I am very pleased that we are able to include the  
16 kinds of things, in terms the increase of street sweeping and the low impact of  
17 development activities. That will make a huge difference, I think, in the long term for the  
18 development that we will be seeing throughout the county with the right kinds of needs  
19 to eliminate stormwater effects that are going into the streams, and ultimately into the  
20 Chesapeake Bay. I think that is obviously going to be an issue we're going to be  
21 spending a fair amount of time on in the future. But now we're going to have the  
22 resources available to help us get going on it. And ultimately, I am so pleased that we  
23 were able to support the School System's request, and especially am pleased that Mr.  
24 Subin and Mr. Silverman presented us early on with the initiative to fund the pensions --  
25 pension additions for our school services employees. As others have said these are the  
26 folks who keep the trains running and I think often are not fully appreciated for all the  
27 good things that they do. And I am very pleased that we were able to find the dollars in  
28 this budget to get their pension up to par. So with that, I think it's been an excellent  
29 experience, a lot easier than previous years, and hopefully the standard for the future.  
30 Thank you very much.

31  
32 Council President Leventhal,  
33 Mr. Denis.

34  
35 Councilmember Denis,  
36 Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you, President Leventhal, for your great leadership  
37 and friendship in helping us reach this positive point. This budget is on-time, balanced,  
38 provides tax relief, meets our needs, and retains our AAA bond rating. This is no mean  
39 feat, and I'm very honored to be a position player on the team. I want to thank my staff:  
40 Ken Hartman, Jennifer Hughes, Colleen Lauer, Adrienne Lewis. I want to thank the  
41 Chairman of the Education Committee I'm honored to serve on, Mike Subin. Thank you  
42 so much for your friendship and for working with me on a multitude of issues, not only  
43 the Churchill Cluster, but all others as well. I want to thank the Chair of the Management  
44 and Fiscal Policy Committee I'm honored to serve on, Marilyn Praisner. Thank you for  
45 your great leadership on leading us through a multitude of issues that we deal with. It's



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1 by virtue of my service on that committee that I'm honored to be the lead member for  
2 Personnel. And so I particularly appreciate the leadership of my Committee colleagues  
3 and the Council as we dealt with the Compensation and Benefits Package, and other  
4 related issues. I want to thank our School Superintendent, Jerry Weast. Thank you very  
5 much, Dr. Weast, for your great leadership. Don't go back to Kansas! And I want to  
6 commend our colleagues, our in-laws, so to speak, on the School Board for their  
7 wisdom in finding and selecting and retaining you as our School Superintendent. I  
8 appreciate that very much. In fact, I believe that the state flower for Kansas is the  
9 sunflower, is that right? State flower for Maryland is a Black-eyed Susan. I think it's very  
10 similar, it may be the same flower, so maybe it was fate that you came our way. And I  
11 think that we're all better off because of it. I didn't make any comments on the CIP  
12 because I didn't want to risk destabilizing anything before the vote, but -- I take no  
13 chances. But I particularly appreciate some of the items there. I want to make some just  
14 general comments on what it means to do a budget, because I've done so many  
15 different budgets and worked on so many different budgets at different levels of  
16 government over the years. But I read somewhere that in the contract for the  
17 Chesapeake Bay Bridge that it provides that when you finish painting on one end you  
18 start on the other end immediately. And I think that's in all the contracts for all the great  
19 bridges. That's what a budget is; it never ends. It reaches a certain point, but you're  
20 always working on the budget. And we've already started working on the following  
21 budget. You have to, there are Special Appropriations, there are changed  
22 circumstances, and all the rest. So the work on the budget is ongoing. And I think we're  
23 all fortunate that we have a deadline, because people tend to work towards deadlines,  
24 and that we're required to have a balanced budget, because that enables us to sort out  
25 so many other issues. And so far as "good year," or "bad year," it may be  
26 counterintuitive but it's been my observation that sometimes it's more difficult to do a  
27 budget in the so-called "good years," as opposed to the bad years, because in the "sub-  
28 optimal" years -- maybe that's the word we'd like to use this year -- in the sub-optimal  
29 years there's always -- it's always preceded by a string of stories and discussion, "Tight  
30 budget," "Fiscal crisis," and all the rest, so the people who come to a legislative body,  
31 they understand that. And so they may be more modest in what they're asking for and  
32 more understanding of any changes in their budget that they might not otherwise be  
33 advocating. In the good years, it's just the opposite. "Budget surplus," "State awash  
34 with money," and so on; and the county. So people come in and say, "I want a piece of  
35 that, I want more of that." And it -- so you get more demands for what ultimately  
36 becomes a decreasing pool of dollars. Plus you want to provide as much tax relief,  
37 especially property tax relief, as you possibly can. And moreover, amazingly, there are  
38 no accepted definitions for some of the words that are thrown around and are so  
39 important in budget making. What is a "cut," what is an "addition," and so on? There's  
40 really no accepted definition of that. And so -- that you can plausible arguments on  
41 either side. Are you just doing the same thing you did last year? Are you adding to it,  
42 are you subtracting from it? Are you accommodating the growth or the special needs,  
43 and so on? And this, I think, is perhaps one of the most frustrating aspects of dealing  
44 with a budget. But we have to do it, we've done it, and I think, President Leventhal, with  
45 your leadership we've reached a very happy conclusion. I do want to comment now on



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1 some of the particular items. In -- as a member of the Education Committee, and just  
2 generally, I'm so pleased that we have \$3 million to expand all-day Kindergarten for the  
3 remaining 30 elementary schools, which is one year ahead of our mandate. And that we  
4 have \$2.3 million for elementary school class reductions and \$750,000 to reduce large  
5 high school classes. And in the CIP -- I'm just going to focus on those items that more  
6 directly relate to the district I'm honored to represent. The Churchill Cluster has been  
7 referred to. We have \$36 million in the CIP, the Capital Improvements Program, for a  
8 solution to the overcrowded schools, including a modernized Seven Locks Elementary  
9 School at Seven Locks in 2010/2011, with funding for immediate planning; an  
10 accelerated Bells Mill Elementary School modernization in 2009; \$1 million in facility  
11 improvements and bathroom repairs at Potomac Elementary School; and \$7.7 million  
12 for an addition to Wayside Elementary School. We also have, outside of the Churchill  
13 Cluster, funding for additions to Ashburton Elementary School; my alma mater,  
14 Bethesda/Chevy Chase High School; Farmland Elementary School; Garrett Park  
15 Elementary School; Luxmanor Elementary School; Pyle Middle School -- that wasn't  
16 easy, I particularly appreciate that; Travilah Elementary School; and Westland Middle  
17 School. There's also funding for restroom renovations at Wayside Elementary School,  
18 Luxmanor, Tilden Middle School, and Bradley Hills Elementary Schools. Funding, as  
19 well for modernization of Carderock Elementary School, Captain John Middle School,  
20 Farmland Elementary School, Garrett Park Elementary School, and Beverly Farms  
21 Elementary School. Now you see why I didn't mention those before, someone might  
22 have jumped in and said, "Well, wait a minute"...

23  
24 Council President Leventhal,  
25 Are we at the fourth lock yet, Mr. Denis?

26  
27 [LAUGHTER]

28  
29 Councilmember Denis,  
30 We're getting there!

31  
32 Councilmember Praisner,  
33 Seven Locks, [Allie].

34  
35 Councilmember Denis,  
36 I have edible lox afterwards, if anyone wants to participate... In the -- in the  
37 transportation field, I appreciate the initiative my seatmate, Mr. Silverman, and others  
38 for the southern entrance to the Bethesda Metro station. \$100,000 to study storm  
39 drainage and road improvements in Glen Echo Heights. Very happy to get Glen Echo  
40 Heights in there; \$50,000 for general trail maintenance and \$200,000 to address  
41 deterioration along the Georgetown Branch Trail; \$7.7 million for Bethesda Parking  
42 Garage facilities improvements; \$940,000 for Bethesda Parking Garage elevator  
43 improvements; \$205,000 for Bethesda Parking signs -- now our gobbledygook word for  
44 signs is now "way finding." You find your way, you know, "way finding". Fewer letters on  
45 signs, and also people understand more what you're talking about. So we have more



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1 money for signs. \$2.2 million for Bethesda Bikeway and pedestrian improvements; \$3  
2 million for Green Tree Road sidewalks; \$1.1 million for McArthur Boulevard Bikeway  
3 improvements; \$3.1 million for Bethesda Central Business District streetscaping;  
4 \$846,000 for Bethesda North Conference Center intersection improvements; \$7.2  
5 million for Nebel Street extended; \$35 million to complete the Montrose Parkway, and I  
6 know we did Montrose East, or however we did it, to try to forward fund Montrose East.  
7 I'm glad we did it, I supported it, but I do not intend to let the state off the hook. That is  
8 supposed to be a state-funded project. The state didn't do it when they were supposed  
9 to do it. And I'm going to fight very hard to see that we are paid back for whatever  
10 forward funding that we might have to provide. \$300,000 for Friendship Heights  
11 pedestrian and transit enhancements; and also for our trails, the Rock Creek Trail and  
12 all the others. In Public Safety: there's \$727,000 for renovations of the Glen Echo Fire  
13 Station; \$2.5 million for renovations to the Rockville and Bethesda Police Stations.  
14 Recreation and Parks: \$141,000 to complete improvements to the Concord local park.  
15 It's very difficult to get money for the smaller urban parks within the Beltway, and I  
16 appreciate -- I appreciate all of this; \$478,000 for improvements to Elmhurst local park...

17  
18 Councilmember Praisner,  
19 Motion to [INAUDIBLE].

20  
21 Councilmember Denis,  
22 \$3.4 million...

23  
24 Multiple Speakers,  
25 [INAUDIBLE]

26  
27 Councilmember Denis,  
28 Some people call it "pork," I call it good government. \$3.4 for a new 25-acre Greenbriar  
29 local park in Potomac; \$649,000 for Montrose Trail in North Bethesda; and \$1.6 million  
30 for a new North Bethesda recreation center. In Libraries: \$558,000 for Potomac Library  
31 renovations. In Health and Human Services: \$10,000 to Bethesda Cares, a great  
32 organization that has over 500 volunteers and looks out for people in the Bethesda  
33 community located in the Central Business District. And this is not District One, per se,  
34 but I'm really pleased at the \$90,000 for Food and Friends, 'cause they do such a great  
35 job to provide meals to persons with HIV and cancer in Montgomery County. And  
36 \$20,000 to the Potomac Community Resources to provide respite services for the  
37 severely disabled and their families. And in the Arts and Humanities: I'm so glad that we  
38 were able to provide money for the Arts in this budget, and in any budget, 'cause I think  
39 this is so important. \$200,000 to retire the debt for the Puppet Company at Glen Echo;  
40 and \$90,500 for a transition grant and to address Americans with Disabilities Act and  
41 security needs for Imagination Stage; \$84,000 for the preservation of historic buildings  
42 at Glen Echo Park; and \$35,000 for ADA -- Americans with Disabilities Act --  
43 improvements to serve the C&O Canal barge at Great Falls. I really appreciate that,  
44 'cause I know it was a late entry. So, thank you very much, Mr. President. And it's a



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1 great budget and I appreciate your great leadership as our presiding officer and all of  
2 my colleagues' help.

3  
4 Council President Leventhal,  
5 Thank you, I was very worried you would forget about the canal boat, but we got it. Mr.  
6 Knapp.

7  
8 Councilmember Knapp,  
9 Thank you, Mr. President.

10  
11 [LAUGHTER]

12  
13 Multiple Speakers,  
14 [INAUDIBLE]

15  
16 Councilmember Knapp,  
17 No, I will be brief. I notice that will each one of us that speaks a few more of you peel  
18 off. And those of you sitting in the middle are going to make sure you don't sit in the  
19 middle next year, I'm pretty sure.

20  
21 [LAUGHTER]

22  
23 Councilmember Knapp,  
24 As a fairly regular church-going Catholic you all kind of remind me of the folks who  
25 came back after communion and got to listen to the priest go through all of the  
26 announcements. And now you're wondering why you did that.

27  
28 [LAUGHTER]

29  
30 Councilmember Knapp,  
31 No, I just want to thank you, Mr. President, for your efforts in this budget, and to thank  
32 our Council staff, OMB staff, and Finance Department. And really -- the Council  
33 President said this in his beginning remarks -- this is, in fact, the peoples' budget. And I  
34 just want to take a minute to thank all of you who have advocated so effectively and  
35 forcefully and artfully and ardently on behalf of all of the positions and interests of our  
36 county and community, because without all of your participation it makes it really, really  
37 tough for all of us to do that job. And so I know you've spent a lot of time over the  
38 course of the last few months with us. And so I want to thank you all very much for that.  
39 And I just wanted to make one mention of -- in the fall we had actually established a set  
40 of priorities, which -- we were helped this year because we have a good economy, but  
41 we did pretty good at staying within the priorities we identified. And I think it's, as Mr.  
42 Denis indicated, budgeting isn't just a one-time deal, it's a year-long process. And so  
43 this was a good step last year to begin to look at how do we take our budget approach  
44 throughout the year. And I think we've taken a good first step as a Council, and I





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1 appreciate everyone's efforts. And I just want to again thank you and thank all of my  
2 colleagues for the last few months.

3  
4 Council President Leventhal,  
5 Ms. Praisner.

6  
7 Councilmember Praisner,

8 Mr. Leventhal, I want to start by thanking you, as Council President, for the outstanding  
9 way in which you operated this year, working with all of us and trying to work through  
10 not only the Health and Human Service Committee's -- which you chair -- needs, but  
11 also the other Committees. I very much respect the way in which you've approached the  
12 process and the way you kept us together as we've gone along. I'm not go through a  
13 litany. I think the -- Mike, the best advice for that Catholic service is to get those  
14 announcements in right after the homily, not wait for after communion. There are lots of  
15 things in this budget that I think all of us can be very proud of. I am especially pleased  
16 with the focus on infrastructure and technology. And Ms. Floreen already made  
17 reference to Park and Planning Commission's requests, but you have to get pretty --  
18 pretty much in bad shape, from a technology perspective to get that kind of attention.  
19 And there are a lot of other departments of county government that require the same  
20 kind of attention that this agency does. Just bringing it up to the end of the 20th century  
21 is not going to answer all of the issues that are there. I'm especially pleased that we're  
22 going to increase the Geographic Information System capacity to look at things like  
23 imperviousness, because environment is always an issue, and environment must  
24 continue to be the issue. So, whether we're talking about the environment as a set-aside  
25 item or transportation and its impacts on the environment, et cetera, we need to have  
26 the data and the information to allow us to make good judgments. I'm also pleased that  
27 Council -- then Council President Perez and I had the opportunity to talk through the  
28 issues of the hidden problems that we have in infrastructure. We focus on the ribbon  
29 cutting and the new roads and the buildings, and we don't talk so much about those  
30 buildings that need maintenance and those roads that need maintenance, and the other  
31 pieces of the road, from street sweeping to tree planting to sidewalk improvements to  
32 curbs that are eroding. So thanks to the former Council President I've had the wonderful  
33 opportunity to work, again, with Glenn Orlin, but also with representatives from each of  
34 the departments and agencies of county government, and the other agencies. And I  
35 hope folks will take back to Charlene Nunley -- and I see representatives of the School  
36 System are here, Park and Planning as well. My thanks for the tremendous work that  
37 has been done and continues to be done by the staffs that have served on the  
38 Infrastructure Task Force. They are not the ones that you normally see front and center  
39 and they don't necessarily get the accolades, and they do deserve them. So I want to  
40 give my hat's off to them. A budget is about partnerships. It's about partnerships among  
41 Councilmembers to get to the nine votes, it's about partnerships working with other  
42 agencies to work through prioritization, it's about partnerships with the community,  
43 especially in the Health and Human Service area. Our whole structure of the delivery of  
44 Human Services is a partnership with the nonprofits and with the other community  
45 members. And I want to especially thank, again, the Council President for working so

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1 aggressively over these past four years on partnerships with our Montgomery Cares  
2 initiative. I think Montgomery County is making significant strides in an area that can  
3 serve as a model for other communities. As my colleagues have said, unfortunately the  
4 state and federal government has left its responsibility at the door and not stepped up to  
5 the plate. And Montgomery County has tried to do that in this partnership framework.  
6 And I think it will, and must, continue. I wanted to talk about one thing that isn't  
7 something that is here on this list of the new items. It's a very small item, but it's a issue  
8 that is a very significance to me, and that's the cable fund. and the fact that we are  
9 adding money to develop more programs for outreach in the community, including  
10 closed captioning, Spanish language programming into English, and English language  
11 programming into Spanish. If we are going to build and strengthen and build on the  
12 community that we call Montgomery County and you want to talk about partnerships we  
13 need to talk about understanding each other more. And I think that small investment in  
14 the cable fund will help us to broaden an understanding of each other and will go a long  
15 way to the educational roles that we have. Mr. Knapp made one reference to the budget  
16 review process. It's much more, as we all know, than looking at the additions and the  
17 deletions, that is part of the budget document that we look at. I know the frustrations out  
18 in the community and the frustrations at this table when we spend time reviewing the  
19 budget in these few months and really can't explore in-depth what we need to from a  
20 base budget perspective. There are some comments and thoughts about the base  
21 budget process which we've just started, that we are going to need to continue to work  
22 on. If this budget is to be sustainable -- and at this point I don't think it is -- but if this  
23 budget is to be sustainable it will take all of us working together creatively to look at the  
24 capacity to unleash the productivity and use the tools to allow our employees to work in  
25 a way that they know is best. We have done a lot of great things today. Keeping it  
26 moving is more than just today's action; it is the full year's deliberations on the next  
27 year's budget, and it is working to unleash the creativity and the suggestions that are  
28 available within our community. Thank you, again, Mr. President, for your leadership. I  
29 look forward to continuing to work with you in these endeavors.

30  
31 Council President Leventhal,

32 Thank you very much to the Council Vice President, I've enjoyed very much working  
33 with you as well. Mr. Subin.

34  
35 Councilmember Subin,

36 Thank you. The first thing I want to do is thank the Council staff and OMB staff for the  
37 extraordinary work that they do. It's mostly behind the scenes, not in front of the  
38 cameras, but it's unbelievable the amount of work that they do. And the teamwork  
39 between the two, which is just extraordinary, to work to the solutions in what we do.  
40 Probably -- I mean Dr. Orlin gets a lot of credit for the CIP and the work on it, as he  
41 should. One person who doesn't from OMB is Martha Lamborn, who probably works as  
42 hard as Dr. Orlin does, but she's not here, she's across the street. Sometimes she  
43 appears to be the adversary...

44  
45 Unidentified Speaker,



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1 Martha's here. Martha's here.

2  
3 Councilmember Subin,

4 No, I know she's here. She's not always here for the TV and sometimes when she is  
5 here, she wishes she wasn't here.

6  
7 [LAUGHTER]

8  
9 Councilmember Subin,

10 But it is a great friendship and a great, great team effort to get where we want to go.  
11 Sometimes where you sit is where you stand, and it appears that we're not sitting in the  
12 same place. So -- but it is great to see that work. I do want to also thank -- I'm not sure  
13 whether to call him -- a volunteer staff person -- the tenth Councilmember, Marv  
14 Weinman, who probably puts out more paperwork than any body else. We don't take all  
15 his suggestions but, in fact, we do take a lot of them. And even when we don't get  
16 where he wants to go we end up asking questions and looking for things where we do  
17 force people to answer the questions and get stuff of the table. And that, in and of itself,  
18 is a tremendous public service. I want to thank the Council for keeping education the  
19 priority that it is. It is the foundation of this community, it is what helps keep us great. It  
20 is what helps us to attract the folks and the companies that gives us the base that we  
21 do. The folks who work in there, whether they're the teachers, the administrators, or the  
22 support workers, lend to a team effort that gives us the very best. Our School System  
23 and college face extraordinary challenges and demands, and they continue to meet  
24 them on a daily basis. The goal posts keep moving farther away. They set higher sights  
25 for themselves, and when they get close -- never quite get there -- they move the goal  
26 posts again. And that is the right thing. We are great, this is a great system, from MCPS  
27 all the way through the college, but we should never be satisfied. We should never sit  
28 on our laurels. We can always do better. Until we have all our graduating seniors being  
29 accepted to Harvard and Yale we can do better, and we will strive to do that. I do want  
30 to thank my friend, Mike Knapp, who does a lot of the unheralded work, the non-  
31 glamorous work, things like fire apparatus and the maintenance on those. We can  
32 spend all we want to spend on fancy equipment, but that equipment does us no good if  
33 we're going to simply be able to put it out in front of the fire stations and make those --  
34 make everybody feel good driving by. But Mike Knapp has made sure that we have put  
35 in place an apparatus and maintenance plan that will keep that stuff going and keep our  
36 firefighters safe. I do want to also thank Mike. In that whole Seven Locks issue Mike  
37 really is probably on the Council had the least personal interest of anybody. Not in his  
38 district, not effecting him one bit, but he had kids in some grades in his district as large  
39 as that school. But he put in an extraordinary amount of time working with folks and  
40 trying to come out with a balanced solution for the kids in that cluster. But not for his  
41 efforts I'm not sure we could have gotten there without going to the brink. I also want to  
42 thank the Superintendent, his staff, and the Board members. This was a very difficult  
43 issue for a lot of reasons, most of which are a lot of moving parts to that. And they were  
44 continually refining the options and giving us options to try to balance off the needs of  
45 that whole cluster. And came up, on Monday morning, with the option that was refined



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1 and tweaked and clarified, and got us there. So to Mike and the Superintendent and the  
2 Board I think there's not been much said about y'all's efforts in this, but if anybody adds  
3 up the hours that Mike and those other folks spent over the last two or three months it  
4 would be tremendous. And we did come up -- Superintendent and Board and the staff  
5 came up with that option, on Monday, that got us to where we were. So thank you all  
6 very much.

7  
8 Council President Leventhal,  
9 Excellent. Okay. We are ready for a straw vote on the Reconciliation List. Those in favor  
10 of the -- tentatively in favor of the Reconciliation List, with final approval occurring next  
11 week, will signify by raising their hands. It is unanimous. Thank you very much to my  
12 colleagues. We now have introduction of a resolution to amend Resolution 15-1272 to  
13 decrease PayGo in FY '06. Without objection the resolution is introduced. We now turn  
14 to the work session on the Damascus Master Plan.

15  
16 Multiple Speakers,  
17 [INAUDIBLE]...

18  
19 Councilmember Praisner,

20  
21 There are some people here for that.

22  
23 Councilmember Silverman,  
24 I'm ready.

25  
26 Councilmember Praisner,  
27 The church is here.

28  
29 Council President Leventhal,  
30 Chairman Silverman.

31  
32 Councilmember Silverman,  
33 Thank you, Mr. President. The PHED Committee met to discuss the Damascus Master  
34 Plan Bypass and the Church of the Redeemer. The PHED Committee unanimously  
35 recommends concurring with the Planning Board's position to delete any reference to a  
36 bypass, which is referenced in the May 2nd letter, found on Circle 16 and 17 of the  
37 packet. And in connection with the Church of the Redeemer the Committee  
38 recommendation is to insert language into the plan recommending that a Park & Ride  
39 lot be located in close proximity to the Church of the Redeemer as a preferred method  
40 to meet the Church's parking needs. If the Park & Ride lot is not built by FY '11 the  
41 Church should be allowed to obtain environmental waivers to build a parking lot on  
42 church property. It is my understanding that this is acceptable to all parties. That's the  
43 committee's recommendation.

44  
45 Council President Leventhal,



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1 Okay. Ms. Praisner.

2  
3 Councilmember Praisner,

4 Yeah, in looking at the language -- I had a conversation with Marlene Michaelson -- and  
5 looking at the language in the bold, and looking at the language on page 5, the  
6 language on page 5 is, I think, more reflective of the Committee, which says if there's a  
7 lot of progress being made, and it's FY '12, not FY '11 when it's going to be  
8 implemented, that flexibility -- as long as there's progress -- flexibility should be  
9 associated with it, as long you're not ignoring the fact that the church needs to move  
10 forward in those time frames. So the FY '11 language is so rigidly stated in the bold, and  
11 less rigidly stated on page 5. I had a conversation with Marlene about that and she  
12 agreed, not having drafted, I think, the bold, she might have modified it. The resolution  
13 will, I hope, be more -- will be softer in the way in which it is presented, because that's  
14 the conversation that we all had.

15  
16 Marlene Michaelson,

17 And the draft resolution language is actually on Circle 18 and 19, and I'll certainly take  
18 another look at that and ask that Councilmembers do as well, to see if there's any  
19 further refinements we need to that specific language.

20  
21 Councilmember Praisner,

22 'Cause I think the draft resolution language probably suggests that, too. It's a tone that  
23 doesn't have somebody standing by a clock waiting for the alarm to go off and say, "Ah-  
24 ha! We move to the next option." It's progress that we all want. And I want to thank the  
25 church for their continued willingness to have conversation. I know they are as  
26 concerned about the environment as they are about finding places and seats and  
27 parking spaces for their congregation. And it just took a little impetus to get the parties  
28 to the table again.

29  
30 Council President Leventhal,  
31 Mr. Knapp.

32  
33 Councilmember Knapp,

34 Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to take a minute to thank the PHED Committee for  
35 their efforts in the entire Damascus Master Plan discussion, but in particular on this  
36 issue. I've heard from many people in the community their appreciation of the  
37 thoroughness in which the Committee has explored all of the issues. So thank you for  
38 your time in that. Thank you for -- thanks to Park and Planning and thank Marlene for  
39 the outreach efforts at the community. It was a very significant public discussion that  
40 took place that evening and I appreciate the time. It was a late night for everybody. And  
41 the efforts that you and the Commission took to make your recommendations back to  
42 the Council. And I would also like to thank the church for continuing to work with us. I  
43 think it's been an amazingly frustrating issue, and I think we have a solution in front of  
44 us that works for all of the parties involved. And so I appreciate everyone's efforts in  
45 getting us back to this point.





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1  
2 Council President Leventhal,  
3 Okay. Ms. Floreen.

4  
5 Councilmember Floreen,  
6 Thank you. I just wanted to make sure, Marlene, if there is any -- if there are any  
7 changes to the Master Plan language would you please make sure Mr. [Vianni] and  
8 their church sees it 'cause it was... I'm not sure that there's any disagreement about this  
9 but I just want to make sure that everyone is comfortable with it. Because there was a  
10 lot of talk about the details and I know the Church is on a very tight time frame. So if we  
11 could just make sure that everyone has a change to weigh in, should there be any  
12 alterations. And otherwise, thanks to everyone for their hard work.

13  
14 Council President Leventhal,  
15 Well, there we go. I understand the actual vote will occur next Thursday and this is just  
16 a work session to get our minds around the issue. And I want to make an  
17 announcement. The Council will conduct a public hearing on the reorganization plan for  
18 the Office of the Board of License Commissioners on Tuesday, June 20th, at 1:30. The  
19 Council stands -- whoop, Mr. Knapp.

20  
21 Councilmember Knapp,  
22 No, just the Homeland Security Committee meeting has been cancelled for this  
23 afternoon .

24  
25 Council President Leventhal,  
26 And today's Homeland Security meeting has been cancelled, and today's PHED  
27 Committee meeting has been cancelled. Council stands adjourned.